

Amendments to the Claims:

I. (Currently Amended) A supporting device for supporting insertion of a medical instrument into a human body, comprising:

a tubular member ~~includes~~ including one of a tubular member engagement section and a tubular member alignment mark, the tubular member further ~~includes~~ including an inner passageway between its opposite ends through which the medical instrument is capable of passing, wherein the tubular member is configured to guide the medical instrument into a digestive organ from an oral cavity through a pharynx, the tubular member is formed in a curved shape in advance to conform to the shape of the pharynx, and the tubular member has a diameter ~~that is larger than that of the pharynx~~ greater than 20mm to allow an expansion of the pharynx;

a reinforcement member formed by a thin plate extending along a perimeter of the inner passageway and having curved shapes conformable to the shape of a pharynx; ~~and;~~

a first guiding member configured to guide the tubular member and the reinforcement member, the first guiding member ~~includes~~ including at least one of a guiding member engagement section and a guiding member alignment mark, such that when the first guiding member engagement section is engaged with the tubular member engagement section, or when the first guiding member alignment mark and the tubular member alignment mark are aligned with each other, the digestive organ end of the first guiding member is generally coincident with the digestive organ end of the tubular member; and

a second guiding member,

wherein the ~~reinforcement element has curved shapes conformable to the shape of a pharynx of a human body,~~ the tubular member and the reinforcement element member guide the medical instrument to the digestive organ through the inner passageway, such that when the guiding member engagement section is engaged with the tubular member engagement section, or when the guiding member alignment mark and the tubular member alignment mark are aligned with each other, the digestive organ end of the guiding member is generally coincident with the digestive organ end of the tubular member.

2. (Currently Amended) A supporting device for supporting insertion of a medical instrument into a human body, comprising:

a tubular member includes one of a tubular member engagement section and a tubular member alignment mark, the tubular member further includes an inner passageway between its opposite ends through which the medical instrument is capable of passing, wherein the tubular member is configured to guide the medical instrument into a digestive organ from an oral cavity through a pharynx, and the tubular member has a diameter ~~that is larger than that of the pharynx~~ greater than 20mm to allow an expansion of the pharynx;

a reinforcement member extending along a perimeter of the inner passageway; and

a first guiding member having a diameter smaller than the inner passageway and insertable from the oral cavity of a human body into the pharynx, the first guiding member is configured to guide the tubular member and the reinforcement member and ~~includes~~ including at least one of a guiding member engagement section and a guiding member alignment mark, such that with the guiding member engagement section engaged with the tubular member engagement section, or with the guiding member alignment mark and the tubular member alignment mark aligned with each other, the digestive organ end of the guiding first member is generally coincident with the digestive organ end of the tubular member; and

a second guiding member,

wherein the first and second ~~guiding member is~~ members are inserted from the oral cavity into the pharynx prior to an insertion of the tubular member, and the first and second ~~guiding member~~ members guiding, when inserted into the pharynx, the tubular member and the reinforcement member from the oral cavity to the pharynx, and

wherein the tubular member and the reinforcement member guide the medical instrument to a digestive organ through the inner passageway; ~~and~~

~~when the guiding member engagement section is engaged with the tubular member engagement section, or when the guiding member alignment mark and the tubular member alignment mark are aligned with each other, the digestive organ end of the guiding member is generally coincident with the digestive organ end of the tubular member.~~

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) The supporting device of claim 1, wherein the reinforcement member has the shape of a spiral continuously extending in a center line direction of the inner passageway.

5. (Previously Presented) The supporting device of claim 1, wherein a digestive organ end of the tubular member extends toward a digestive organ ahead of a digestive organ end of the reinforcement member.

6. (Previously Presented) The supporting device of claim 1, wherein the digestive organ end of the tubular member is slanted with respect to the center line of the inner passageway.

7. (Previously Presented) The supporting device of claim 1, wherein the tubular member is molded with the reinforcement member buried therein.

8 - 9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) The supporting device of claim ~~3~~ 1, wherein:
the tubular member is made of a resin material; and
the first guiding member is made of another resin material harder than the resin material of the tubular member.